

III CORPS AND FORT HOOD SAFETY GRAM

AFZF-GA-SAFE-G (385-10)

28 Nov 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Flooding And Low Water Crossings

1. Lessons learned from a recent accident involving a fatality highlight the need for soldiers to follow established standards and for leaders to continuously apply risk management procedures to ensure mission success. During a tactical vehicle road march, a tracked vehicle was washed off of a tactical low water crossing by strong water currents of a rain-swollen creek. Except for the driver, the crew was able to make it to safety.

2. Commanders/leaders should review and apply the following lessons learned to prevent recurrences of this type of tragic incidents:

a. Weather warnings with frequent updates are common for this area. Commanders must review weather dissemination procedures to ensure soldiers are adequately apprised of low water crossing trafficabilities. Mission risk assessments (IAW III Corps Command Policy # G1-00-10, Subject: III Corps Command Safety Policy, 8 May 00), have to fully assess every potential condition/hazard to ensure mission success. As any other condition, weather conditions can rapidly change before missions are completed and therefore must be reevaluated. When conditions change, a conscious effort is required to update risk assessments and possible courses of actions.

b. Tactical low water crossings must be treated as water obstacles - every time. Negative transfer habit can occur when soldiers/vehicles have to cross a swollen creek that they have frequently crossed under dry conditions when water levels were low. Leaders must ensure that overconfidence does not displace proper water obstacle reconnaissance requiring dismounting and adequately assessing the situation. TACSOPs should address proper procedures for safely crossing water obstacles.

c. Driver training programs should include obstacle avoidance and water crossing training for both tracked and wheeled vehicle operations. This ensures soldiers are ready to perform during unexpected severe weather conditions. Additionally, equipment should be stored/loaded on vehicles IAW the unit's standardized vehicle load plan. Equipment not loaded IAW the unit's load plan should be identified and corrected during Pre Combat Inspections (PCI). During PCIs, special emphasis must be placed on equipment not blocking potential escape hatches or doors.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

// Original Signed//
STEVEN P. SCHOOK
Colonel, USA
Chief of Staff

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